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# Inside Information

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## U.S. SHIFTING TO INFORMATION SOCIETY

The United States is rapidly shifting from a mass industrial society to an information society.

The final impact will be more profound than the 19th century shift from an agricultural to an industrial society.

This is the "gospel" being preached before many audiences by John Naisbitt, senior vice president of Yankelovich, Skelly and White, and publisher of the "Trend Report."

He also says there is more decentralization than centralization taking place in America--for the first time in the Nation's history.

The power is shifting not only from the President to the Congress, but--less noticed--from the Congress to the states and localities.

Naisbitt also says we are now a truly global economy because of instantaneously-shared information, and the world is deeply in the process of a redistribution of labor and production.

As part of this process, all of the developed countries are re-industrializing, he says.

He goes on to say that American society is moving in dual directions of "high tech/high touch."

He explains that the introduction of every new technology is accompanied by a compensatory human response--or the new technology is rejected.

His final point is that there are beginnings of a job revolution in the United States, a basic restructuring of the work environment from top-down to bottom-up.

Naisbitt usually keeps his audience spell-bound. A recent luncheon session with government communicators was no different.

(NOTE: A copy of a summary of Naisbitt's opinions on economic and political trends in the United States is available from the Editor of "INSIDE INFORMATION.")

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## NEW ACE COORDINATOR SELECTED

Long-time USDA and land-grant university information official, Hal Taylor, will be the new national coordinator and secretary-treasurer of the Agricultural Communicators in Education.

Taylor will assume the new post with ACE as of July 1.

He will succeed Joe Marks at the University of Missouri, who has held the post since July 1978.

Taylor retired as USDA's public affairs director last fall, after serving as deputy information director for a number of years.

He also is well remembered for starting "INSIDE INFORMATION" as a way to communicate with agricultural communicators in USDA, state departments of agriculture and land-grant universities.

Taylor will operate the national ACE headquarters from his residence in Falls Church, Va.

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## CNS WIRE BEING ADAPTED AS DATABASE

The Commodity News Service (CNS) wire is being adapted to serve as an on-line database for home and business computer subscribers by CompuServe, Inc., of Columbus, Ohio.

The CNS offering comes on the heels of two home-oriented databases made available by CompuServe earlier last month.

The CNS database will incorporate two-fifths of the material covered by the printed wire service: Basic news stories including market commentaries and statistics, and futures market price tables.

Director of information for the firm said CompuServe is trying to get deeper into the "business end" of the home computer database service market.

It is similar to the UPI news information service offered by Dialcom, Inc., another firm. Some USDA agencies are subscribing to that service.

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## PUBLISHING CENTER INQUIRIES SURVEYED

A comprehensive survey of public inquiries for USDA publications is underway by the Office of Governmental & Public Affairs' Publishing Center.

The survey will help determine in advance if consumers, educators, students and farmers need a new publication (or major revision) on a given subject.

It should also help develop fewer but better publications, according to Ed Poe, head of publication development and training in the Publishing Center.

This can happen by coordinating publication efforts more closely with those of the states, or by developing a series to meet the needs of an audience.

It can happen by coordinating publications with USDA action programs and by providing agency program staffs and scientists with information which can justify a publication on a specific topic.

Poe said one out of every ten letters received by the Office of Governmental & Public Affairs is being surveyed in order to receive a high statistical accuracy.

Each letter surveyed is assigned a control number, but no names or street addresses are used.

The survey will be concluded at the end of this fiscal year.

## AGRICULTURE NEWS SERVICE ESTABLISHED

Beginning in January, a new agricultural news service was inaugurated.

It is called "AgLine," an offshoot of the Laboratory for Information Science and Agriculture, a department in the College of Agricultural Sciences at Colorado State University.

The new service is designed to inform the public of agriculture's growing impact.

"AgLine" sends monthly packages of about eight articles to news wire services, individual newspapers and farm periodicals, which have the option of running the stories (and paying for them) or not.

Initially, the funding is from private sources, but ultimately the service intends to be self-supporting.

"AgLine" is looking for stringers, both writers and photographers, in all parts of the nation.

For more information, contact Mary Roberts or Rosemary Menniger, AgLine, 301 Aylesworth, Fort Collins, Colo. 80523. Telephone is (303) 491-5863

## INFORMATION POSITIONS ADVERTISED

Two public information specialist positions have been announced by USDA agencies.

Forest Service has a GS-11 public information specialist position in its Office of Information's Current Information Group in Washington, D.C.

Position involves producing newsletters; writing news releases, feature articles and reports; and answering media inquiries.

Non-Forest Service applicants should file volunteer applications.

Contact Diane O'Connor of Forest Service's Office of Information for more information about the job--447-4211.

Closing date for applications is March 23.

The second position is in the Rural Electrification Administration. It is a GS-7 or GS-9 public information specialist position, dealing primarily with Freedom of Information Act activities.

The position is in REA's Office of Information and Public Affairs' Current Information Branch.

Applications are due March 17. Submit to Rose Mary Rowland in Room 4078-S, REA Personnel Division, telephone 447-2734.

## USDA ELECTRONIC MAIL EXPERIMENT BEGINS

USDA News Center in Office of Governmental & Public Affairs, information divisions of the Agricultural Marketing Service and Food Safety & Quality Service, and the five regional information offices are beginning a three-month electronic mail test March 2. The system also will be used to retrieve UPI news electronically.

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\* "INSIDE INFORMATION" needs items of \*  
\* interest from its readers. A lot of \*  
\* things are happening to folks, and \*  
\* folks are doing lots of things, we \*  
\* know, in state departments of agricul- \*  
\* ture, land-grant universities, USDA \*  
\* agencies (in the field and in Wash- \*  
\* ington, D.C.), etc. So let the editor \*  
\* hear from you, and often. Send your \*  
\* written contributions to Editor, \*  
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